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SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

THE RESTORATION OF SEAWAYS AND SEAPORTS
IN THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC.

After the most important navigation routes had been cleared of wrecks and mines, it became urgently necessary, through the sudden growth of the fishing fleet, to search the entire sea region for wrecks and salvage them. The Directorate General for Water Transport, which is the central administration of waterways, created in the Economy Enterprise of Ship Salvage and Diving the necessary instrument for the solution of these problems. Experienced seamen volunteered and, with seaworthy ships and newly developed wreck-searching implements, patrolled the sea region, determined navigation obstacles by coordinates, and marked them with wreck buoys. Seamen activists developed new salvage methods, determined priorities, worked out performance norms for the various implements and vehicles, and set up competitive programs for the given tasks. To the salvage group of the Free German Youth, because of their top

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performances in the contest, was given the largest salvage ship, the youth ship 1 Mai, with a winch power of 100 tons; today it works at a norm of 3 tons of scrap metal per hour. Salvage activities in 1950 brought from the sea waters of the GDR around 12,000 tons of the most valuable ferrous and nonferrous scrap metal and, thus, in addition to the clearing of navigable waters, made a very valuable contribution of raw material for the steel industry of the GDR.

To restore the depth of navigable water, the maintenance of which had been neglected for more than a decade, to ensure the transshipping capacity of the seaports, and to make possible the approach in the necessary water depth to the shipyards (for seagoing vessels) which were then being enlarged or constructed, unusual dredging achievements were needed. Thus, with outmoded equipment, sometimes in heaviest silt, more than 2,240,000 cubic meters of spoil were raised in the years 1946 - 1949. Through the creation of an equipment control station which centrally directs the application and the repair of dredges, barges, tugboats, etc., through exemplary performances of the activists, through contests on the equipment unit level, and through introduction of multi-shift operation, it was possible, in 1950, to surpass even the achievements of the previous years, so that a yearly output of around 1,600,000 cubic meters could be achieved.

In addition, something had to be done to counteract the heavy silting of the navigable waters, caused primarily by increased shifting of sand with the coastal currents due to the vast deterioration of the breakwater systems. It proved necessary, therefore, also to take up again, in cooperation with the water economy management, the tasks of coastal protection, neglected during the Nazi period. For the protection of the particularly imperiled north-west navigation channel to Stralsund, new, heavy sea dikes of great length were built, and on the Bock Peninsula, large areas of protective plantings were newly set up. In close connection with this, the Hydrographic Service of the GDR conducted extensive soundings and current, sand shifting, and wave measurements, as well as ground surveys, to establish the bases for further tasks in such a manner that faulty investments will with certainty be avoided. In the sea district of Warnemuende, also, such measurements and soundings were conducted as bases for model experiments to create for the shipyards and ocean fishing bases arising in this area the required navigable water conditions.

The condition of the sea moles at the end of the war gave cause for the greatest alarm. Very heavy war damage, as well as a 10-year interruption of any maintenance work, had seriously imperiled the continuance of these constructions. Especially the Warnemuende east mole, which is more than one kilometer long, was in an almost hopeless condition. The difficulties of reconstruction were increased through the lack of steel-sheet piling. In 1948, there was an immediate danger of collapse of the pier head and the entrance light. Today, once more, the mole stands secure because of extraordinary performances by workers and engineers. Similar conditions existed at the west mole in Warnemuende and the moles in Sassnitz and Stralsund which, in addition to the natural signs of deterioration, also showed extensive damages from the war. In Stralsund, due to the neglected condition of the north and east moles, the entire traffic in the harbor, which opens to the northeast, was endangered. In 1949, the north mole was made safe again for operation in its old form. That was not possible with the east mole, which had been constructed in 1925 - 1927 as part of an enlargement of the harbor. Already in 1939 - 1940, the mole needed a general overhauling since, in the meantime, due to unfavorable conditions of foundation soil (solid supporting soil does not begin in part until 26 meters below the mean water level), settlement of up to 2 meters had occurred. But the overhaul did not stop the settling either; rather, the damages increased in the war years through lack of maintenance. Thus, the construction method had to be changed fundamentally. On both sides of the partly sagging row of piles, between which had been placed fascines and rocks, additional rock fillings at a slope of 1:2 are now being added on fascine mattresses, and thus, an embankment profile up to 2 meters is produced, which can be tamped further in case of further settlement.

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As already mentioned, the capacity of the seaports is going to be increased only to such an extent as seems feasible in the scope of the total German picture. Therefore, after repair of the war damages, only investments were undertaken which were required for the transshipping of such goods as will also flow through these ports after the restoration of the unity of all of Germany. Thus, there is no room for the old principles of local planning as applied by the seaport towns to attract transshipping business.

In 1948, harbor associations were incorporated for the management of the most important commercial ports: Rostock-Warnemuende, Wismar, and Stralsund. In them are represented, with an equal number of votes, the government of the GDR through the Directorate General of Water Transport, the government of Land Mecklenburg, and the city administrations.

The harbor associations are charged with, among other things, the maintenance of the harbors and all harbor installations. The Directorate General of Water Transport, through its representation in the harbor associations, is in a position to enforce the coordination of harbor-enlargement plans with those of the sea waterways.

During the Nazi period, the Baltic seaports of our coastal district had been extremely neglected, so that the available pier installations in many cases had to be completely renewed. In places, a greater water depth has been provided for, in which case, due to the lack of steel-sheet piling, completely new methods often had to be employed. Thus, in Wismar, a new, 300-meter-long quay wall on pile cluster with projecting slope was constructed for the first time with prefabricated reinforced-concrete parts. At the construction of this wall, wooden pilings, resting on reinforced-concrete tips, were used to a great extent. This method of construction prevents rotting of the piles driven in open water and, at the same time, saves erection of the expensive cofferdam (see also, Der Verkehr, Vol VI, 1950, p 177; Vol I, 1951, p 27).

In Wismar, a car-tipping installation for potash was built. This installation makes possible the transloading of 400 tons of potash per hour directly from the railroad cars to the seagoing vessels by means of large conveyer belts. At present, a potash storage hall of 20,000 tons' capacity is being built as an intermediary storage, which likewise can be loaded mechanically and can be emptied over conveyer belts through scrapers. At present, almost 500 special railroad cars shuttle between the Thuringen production districts and Wismar to transport the potash, one of the GDR's most important export goods, to the international water transport route.

The crane installations, in many places outmoded and damaged by the war, were replaced by new portal cranes and bridge cranes. In Rostock, in addition to smaller freight sheds, loading halls, etc., a new three-story harbor warehouse was erected with a reinforced-concrete floor for a load of 200 kilograms of freight per square meter. This structure was made with extensive use of prefabricated structural units. As a complement to these transloading installations and constructions, extensive social installations were set up in accordance with the GDR's concept of concern for human beings. In particular, exemplary shower installations were provided at the places where coal, potash, etc., are being transloaded, and first-aid stations were set up in all harbor districts.

Especially high expenditures were required by the seamark system, which is of increased importance for the security of maritime navigation, most particularly in the sea areas affected by the war. Since, in all these areas, mines and wrecks endanger navigation even today, the marking of the navigation channels is more important than ever. This requirement is principally served by the so-called compulsory routes, whose management in the sea waters of the GDR was again taken into German hands to their full extent of approximately 150 nautical miles in 1950.

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The expansion of the buoy maintenance shops in Wismar, Sassnitz, and Ueckermünde and the setting up of new ones in Warnemünde and Stralsund provide the opportunity of better maintenance of these installations, which are constantly controlled by four seamark ships of different types. Thus, it was possible to resume regularly everywhere the exchange of summer and winter buoys. Simultaneously, the old wooden seamarks which were still in use in some places were replaced at all important navigation routes by steel marks. The unattended direction lights and alternating beacons were equipped with control instruments and new light-source changing devices, which, in case of breakdowns, cause an automatic change-over of the lights from electricity to propane gas. Work for night lighting of the navigation channel in Wismar Bay, a completely new project, assumed particularly large proportions. There, among others, four direction lights had to be placed in open water on a foundation of pilings (see, Der Verkehr, Vol I, 1951, p 29).

At the same time, a seamark proving ground which had been completely destroyed at the end of the war was rebuilt and newly equipped with testing and measuring instruments.

A new office with the title, Chief of Pilot Affairs, with headquarters in Rostock, has been established. It is subordinated directly to the Directorate General of Water Transport. This means that the pilots are no longer employees of the waterway offices but have received, in conjunction with a substantial improvement in their economic position, their own administration.

The pilot stations in existence, in conformity with increased coastal navigation, were enlarged and supplied with personnel.

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